

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUDAPE 01550 120846Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
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R 111447Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8489
INFO USIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL MUNICH

UNCLAS BUDAPEST 1550

E O 11652: NA
TAGSC SOPN PFOR CSCE HU
SUBJ: NEPSZABADSAG ARTICLE CRITICIZES RFE, RL

1. HSWP DAILY NEPSZUBADSAG MAY 11 EDITION CARRIES PAGE 5
ARTICLE BY COMMENTATOR PETER SERENY SEVERELY CRITICIZING
ACTIVITIES OF RFE AND RL AND PRES CARTER'S DECISION TO
SEEK CONGRESSIONAL FUNDS FOR STRONGER TRANSMITTERS.
ALTHOUGH ARTICLE UNIFORMLY CRITICAL, TONE IS NOT OVERLH
BITTER OR POLEMIC. THIS IS FIRST TIME IN PAST FEW YEARS
THAT MAJOR ARTICLE ON RFE APPEARED IN HUNGARIAN MEDIA,
AND APPEARS TO BE PART OF GENERALIZED EE CAMPAIGN TO
ATTACK RFE AS CONTRARY TO HELSINKI AGREEMENTS.

2. ARTICLE ENTITLED, "PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE INSTEAD OF
DIALOGUE?" STATES THAT ALTHOUGH SINCE 1971 STATIONS ARE
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FINANCED OPENLY BY U.S. CONGRESS AND NO LONGER BY CIA,
AND THEIR METHODS HAVE BECOME MORE "POLISHED," MEMORY
OF "INCITING ROLE" PLAYED BY RFE IN 1956 STILL VIVID.
QUOTING NYT ARTICLE ASKS WHY U.S. MUST SUPPORT DUAL
RADIO SYSTEM, PARALLEL WITH VOA WHICH IS "STRICTLY
SUPERVISED BY STATE DEPARTMENT" AND EXPLAINS GOVERNMENT
POLICY.

3. SERENY QUOTES PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS THAT RFE AND RL SHOULD STIMULATE CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE WITH SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE. THIS AUTHOR SAYS IS "NOT UNDERSTANDABLE" SINCE RFE STAFF NOT CAPABLE OF SUCH DIALOGUE DUE TO THEIR BACKGROUNDS AS QUOTE WAR CRIMINALS, TURNCOATS AND PEOPLE WITH DUBIOUS PASTS, BUT CERTAINLY NOT JOURNALISTS UNQUOTE.

4. STATING THAT U.S. WOULD NEVER TOLERATE SUCH AN ACTIVITY DIRECTED TOWARD ITSELF, SERENY ASSERTS THAT RADIOS ARE STILL INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AGENCIES INTERFERING IN COUNTRIES' INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

5. READERS ARE REMINDED THAT NO ONE SHOULD MISUNDERSTAND:

QUOTE HUNGARY, LIKE OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FROM RFE. JANOS KADAR STATED CLEARLY THAT

HUNGARY'S INTERNAL SITUATION IS SOLID AND SOCIALISM IS BEING BUILT. LAST FALL, HUNGARY'S ENEMIES COMMEMORATED THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1956, BUT COULD ONLY CONCLUDE THAT TODAY THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY FOR ANY OTHER POLICY IN HUNGARY THAN THE ONE WHICH IS BEING FOLLOWED UNQUOTE.

6. ARTICLE ALSO CRITICAL OF FRG FOR ALLOWING STATIONS TO OPERATE ON ITS SOIL IN SPITE OF NE, TOO, BEING HELSINKI SIGNATORY.

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7. SERENY CONCLUDES THAT QUOTE AMERICA'S DISSONANT

VOICE FROM MUNICH DOES WHAT NO NATION SHOULD UNQTE, THAT

IS INTERFERES IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. PERHAPS SOME CONSIDER THAT CONSISTENT WITH HELSINKI, BUT WE DO NOT. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE, NO MATTER HOW FINELY WAGED, CANNOT BE RECONCILED WITH CARTER'S WISH TO ENCOURAGE CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE. RFE'S METHODS MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BUILD MUTUAL CONFIDENCE OR UNDERSTANDING. ONE WOULD THINK THAT BEFORE BELGRADE THE STATION WOULD BE PHASED OUT INSTEAD OF STRENGTHENED UNQUOTE.

7. COMMENT: ARTICLE SAYS VERY LITTLE THAT IS NEW. WHAT IS NEW IS THAT HUNGARY, WHICH HAS BEEN PUBLICLY QUITE NONCHALANT ABOUT RFE FOR PAST SEVERAL YEARS, HAS SEEN

FIT TO GO ON RECORD WITH A WRITTEN ATTACK. ALTHOUGH ARTICLE IS SIGNED BY A RELATIVELY JUNIOR WRITER AND IS

NOT PLACED IN A PROMINENT POSITION, IT REMAINS TO BE
SEEN WHETHER IT REPRESENTS THE BEGINNING OF A CAMPAIGN
OR WHETHER IT IS JUST A ONE-SHOT AFFAIR. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Event:
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TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, US, HU, CSCE, RL, RFE, (SERENY, PETER)
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